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Fauquier County, VA

For more information contact: Trish Ethier, Recycling Education Coordinator

Department of Environmental Services

(540) 347-6811

www.fauquiercounty.gov

On December 7, 2007 Fauquier County Department of Environmental Services (FCES) was recognized nationally with a second place award for waste reduction and recycling efforts by a government agency. Fauquier County staff accepted the award at the 54th Annual Keep America Beautiful National Awards luncheon at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC.

Fauquier County, a rural community of 65,000 has a multifaceted recycling program which includes participation by county residents, schools, county government offices and private businesses. During the fiscal year 2006-07, the FCES recycling program diverted over 10,000 tons of recyclables from the county landfill which included 21 tons of aluminum, 228 tons of textiles, 1,300 tons of paper products, 85 tons of plastic bottles, 339 tons of glass, 98 tons of electronics, 4,600 tons of yard waste and 2,622 tons of steel. Other recyclables included fluorescent light bulbs, used motor oil, oil filters, tires auto batteries, antifreeze, household hazardous waste and paint cans. Methane gas produced by decomposing organic waste that does make it into the landfill was transformed into useable electricity to fuel about 500 homes in the Warrenton area. The county reported a 25.5% recycling rate to the Commonwealth of Virginia and received \$224,000 in revenue.

Many improvements have recently been made. One of these improvements is the acceptance of electronics six days a week. In July, 2007, FCES opened a new regional construction and demolition recycling center that receives between 200-500 tons daily for sorting and processing. Currently about 40% is being recycled. This material includes, wooden pallets, lumber scraps, PVC piping, corrugated cardboard, scrap steel, carpet, asphalt shingles and concrete. "One of the main challenges in an operation of this magnitude," states Nathaniel Townley, FCES Commodities Coordinator, "is finding an end user for each material sorted out and processing it to the end users specifications.

Finding the best price is also important in a forever fluctuating market.” The projected revenue from recycling for this year will be just under one million dollars.

As more individuals and organizations in Fauquier County become aware and support the recycling effort, the more waste Fauquier County will be able to divert from the county landfill, but for the meantime, Keep America Beautiful has given the county national recognition for a job well done.

For more information about the Keep America Beautiful National Award and about the county’s recycling efforts, contact Trish Ethier at (540) 347-6811 or trish.ethier@fauquiercounty.gov.

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